

## **Northern Courthouse Road Plan**

### **Land Use Analysis**

#### **Residential, Office, Commercial & Industrial**

(8/30/05)

#### **A. Purpose of Analysis**

This analysis attempts to anticipate the need for residential, office, commercial and industrial land within the study area based on potential market demand and community-wide land use planning practices. Specifically, real estate professionals often analyze potential uses for property based on the principle of "highest and best use", a term often defined as 'the legal use of a parcel of land which, when capitalized, will generate the greatest net present value of income'. Implied in the term is the notion that market forces (supply, demand, competition, etc.) can best determine how land should be used. However, "highest and best use" is only one principle applicable to a land use analysis. Another, equally important principle is "most appropriate use" which, borrowing from the Code of Virginia, might be defined as 'a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of lands within a jurisdiction which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of that jurisdiction's citizens'. Consideration of both principles is appropriate in a land use plan analysis.

This analysis makes no attempt to determine the current or short-term marketability of any one parcel for any one use. Rather, it attempts to anticipate future needs for broad categories of land uses throughout the study area over time. In addition, this analysis does not attempt to suggest the specific relationships of these uses to one another within the study area, or within the wider community. These relationships are best determined by means of a *Comprehensive Plan* amendment. Private market forces (availability and price of land, location, character and age of competing businesses, site-specific characteristics such as topography and visibility from roads, etc.) would decide the desirability of a specific use on one parcel over another, as well as the timing for developing such use, based on the principle of 'highest and best use'. The zoning process would determine the appropriateness of such use on a case-by-case basis by applying the guidelines for desirable land use development patterns as outlined in the Plan.

Demand for additional, or differently located, land in any zoning classification or land use category is influenced by many factors, some of which are hard to quantify or predict. In addition, limitations on the types and quality of readily available data, together with differing opinions on the significance of this data and how best to analyze, interpret and use it, further complicate the task of predicting future land use needs. For these reasons, this analysis must be viewed as one of many tools used to craft a land use plan amendment for the *Northern Courthouse Road Plan* study area.

## **B. Study Area Boundaries and Existing Conditions** (Map 1)

In general, the study area boundaries are: Falling Creek and the Genito Woods neighborhood to the west; Pocoshock Creek, Adkins Road, and the neighborhoods of Pocoshock Heights and Bexley West to the east; the rear boundary of properties fronting Midlothian Turnpike to the north; and the rear boundary of properties fronting Hull Street Road and Gregory's Pond to the south. The Plan geography is approximately 8.5 square miles in area, comprising approximately two percent of the land area of the county.

The study area of this *Plan* amendment includes portions of *The Powhite/Route 288 Development Area Plan* (adopted in 1985), the *Northern Area Plan* (adopted in 1986), and a small portion of the *Route 360 Corridor Plan* (adopted in 1995) and the *Midlothian Area Community Plan* (adopted 1989).

Existing zoning and land use patterns within the study area reflect a mix of residential and agricultural zoning and uses, with retail commercial, office and industrial zoning and uses at the intersection of Lucks Lane and Courthouse Road and near the northern edge of the study area where it approaches Midlothian Turnpike. Powhite Parkway provides the major east/west access, linking the study area to the western end of the county as well as the City of Richmond. Courthouse Road is the major north/south access, joining the study area to the northwestern parts of the county, as well as the central and eastern areas of Chesterfield.

## **C. Summary of Findings**

A review of zoning, subdivision and site plan activity between 1994 and June 1, 2005 suggests that the demand for new development within the study area is primarily for various types of residential, and to a lesser extent industrial and commercial, uses.

## *Supporting Document B*

The study area has experienced a population growth rate between January 1994 and December 31, 2004 that is about two percent less than the countywide average.

The area's demand for retail and other commercial uses generally appears to be satisfied by shopping centers and other commercial establishments within, and outside of, the study area. However, future residential growth in the area may warrant additional commercial space.

Extensive employment center uses are planned to the west of the study area along the Charter Colony Parkway/Route 288/Powhite Parkway area. These outside development factors will have an impact on the demand for land use within the study area, primarily in the form of residential demand, with some office to provide personal services to surrounding residential and non-residential developments.

In most instances, viable residential neighborhoods within the study area are located in proximity to existing or potential office, commercial and industrial sites. Commercial, office and industrial zoning activity should be guided in a manner that protects these neighborhoods.

### **D. Zoning Activity within the Study Area between 1994 and June 1, 2005** (Map 2)

Analysis of past zoning activity is one way to anticipate future demand for residential, office, commercial and industrial zoning and land uses within the study area. Specifically, land is typically rezoned with an expectation on the part of the owner/developer, that it can be developed in the future for uses within the new zoning category.

Approximately 72 percent of the study area is zoned for a category other than agricultural. This is over the county average of 42 percent, indicating the study area is more developed than the county overall.

The following table summarizes zoning activity within the study area between 1994 and June 1, 2005:

<b>Type of Zoning Activity</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Rezoning from Agricultural to Residential classifications	321 acres
Rezoning from Agricultural to Commercial/Office classifications	4 acres
Rezoning from Agricultural to Industrial classifications	4 acres
Rezoning from Commercial/Office to Industrial classifications	1 acre
Rezoning from Commercial/Office to Residential classifications	10 acres

## Supporting Document B

Zoning activity within the study area since 1994 has increased the inventory of residentially-zoned land, followed by a slight increase in industrial-zoned land. The following table summarizes net zoning gains/losses within the study area between 1994 and June 1, 2005:

<b>Zoning Classification</b>	<b>Net Change</b>
Residential	+331 acres
Industrial	+5 acres
Commercial/Office	-7 acres
Agricultural	-329 acres

Data for zoning compiled from Chesterfield County GIS data for 5/1/05

Note: this data is a reflection of base zoning only and does not factor uses that may be permitted through CUPD (such as commercial uses on residential property, etc.)

The following table summarizes the breakdown of zoning acreage and land usage within the study area as of December 31, 2004:

<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>% of Total</b>		<b>Acres Developed</b>	<b>Acres Vacant/Minimal Improvement</b>	<b>% Vacant/Minimal Improvement</b>
Agricultural	1,341	28		920	421	31
Residential	3,268	68		3,097	171	5
Office	27	1		19	8	30
Commercial	64	1		53	11	17
Industrial	78	2		59	19	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,778</b>	<b>100</b>		<b>4,148</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>13</b>

2004 Development Potential Database

Note: this data is a reflection of base zoning only and does not factor uses that may be permitted through CUPD (such as commercial uses on residential property, etc.)

Data for land use compile from Chesterfield County Planning Department Land Use Database for 2004 (12/31/04)

## **ZONING ACTIVITY – CONCLUSIONS**

Based upon zoning activity over the last decade, there is a demand for residentially-zoned land. Current zoning activity, as judged by zoning cases within the Plan geography currently pending before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, suggests that the demand for residentially-zoned land will continue in the coming years.

### **E. Residential Development Activity within the Study Area 1995 to 2004** (Map 3)

Another way to anticipate future demand for residential, office, commercial and industrial zoning and land uses is to examine development activity in recent years. The influx of new families into the area and the development of new housing units in subdivisions suggest a demand for residential land uses. Tracking population growth in and around the study area can also suggest future demand for housing, jobs, services and retail trade.

The following table estimates population growth rates between 1995 and 2004:

<b>Area</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Study Area	14,420	17,051	18
Chesterfield County	242,700	291,000	20

Data for population compiled from estimates in the Chesterfield County Planning Department land use database for 2004 (12/31/04)

As indicated by this table, the study area's population growth rate, from 1995 to 2004, is estimated to be two percent less than the countywide population growth rate for the same period.

Residential development within the study area is characterized primarily by single-family residences in subdivisions, by residences on acreage parcels, and by residential units in multi-family complexes.

#### **1. Single Family**

A review of Chesterfield County GIS data between 1995 and 2004 reveals an increase of 958 single-family residences (in single family subdivisions and on acreage parcels) within the study area during this time period, from 5,228 residences to 6,186 residences, or an increase of about 18 percent. A similar review for the entire county during this time period for single family residences reveals a countywide increase of about 24 percent.

According to *The Chesterfield County Residential Report* (July 2004), the study area had an inventory of about 336 undeveloped lots in recorded and tentatively approved subdivisions (approximately five percent of all lots within the study area). For the same year, the county as a whole had an inventory of 24,777 such lots (approximately 24 percent of all lots within the county).

## **2. Multi-Family, Condominium & Townhouse**

A review of Chesterfield County GIS data from 1995 to 2004 reveals no increase in the number of multi-family, condominium and/or townhouse residences within the study area during this time period. A similar review of the entire county during this time period for multi-family, condominium and/or townhouse residences reveals a countywide increase of 34 percent. However, a TASCAN project was approved in 2004, but is as yet undeveloped, that will add approximately 160 condominiums to the area.

According to The Chesterfield County Residential Report (July 2004), the study area had no undeveloped units in multi-family, condominium and townhouse developments. For the same period, the county as a whole had an inventory of 3,728 undeveloped units (19 percent of all multi-family, condominium, and townhouse units within the county).

## **RESIDENTIAL DEMAND – CONCLUSIONS**

The biggest demand for new housing within the study area has been single family housing in subdivisions, based on zoning, residential construction, and subdivision activity since 1995. Only around five percent of the study area's residentially-zoned land is still vacant or minimally-improved. Furthermore, the study has much less multi-family housing than the county average. In addition, the Courthouse Road corridor is situated between three major existing and planned commercial nodes (Midlothian Turnpike, Hull Street Road, and Charter Colony Parkway), and could therefore support a higher density of residential development along its frontage within the study area.

## **F. Office, Commercial & Industrial Development Activity within the Study Area Between 1995 and 2004** (Map 3)

### **1. Office Development**

In recent decades, major office zoning and development activity (office park use) has occurred in the northern portions of the county, along Midlothian Turnpike and the Powhite Parkway corridor. In addition, many properties

zoned for such use a decade or more ago have yet to begin developing. However, with the recent completion of improvements to Route 288, it is anticipated that such development will occur just outside of the study area.

A review of construction activity between 1995 and 2004 suggests that approximately 13,710 square feet of office space has been developed within the study area, or about 0.9 percent of such space developed countywide for the same time period.

## **OFFICE DEMAND – CONCLUSIONS**

There are currently eight acres of office-zoned land that is currently vacant or minimally-improved. Office demand within the study area will most likely continue as specialized offices supporting other uses, such as retail and industrial development, and supporting the needs of area residents for personal and professional services.

## **2. Commercial Development**

Commercial development patterns within the study area are primarily characterized by commercial zoning and uses along the northern edge of the geography (near Midlothian Turnpike), and at the intersection of Lucks Lane and Courthouse Road.

A review of construction activity between 1995 and 2004 suggests that approximately 38,461 square feet of commercial space has been developed within the study area, or about 0.6 percent of such space developed countywide for the same time period.

### **a. Commercial – Shopping Centers (Map 4)**

The study area contains one neighborhood-scale shopping center. In addition, the study area is within the service radius of six convenience centers, 17 neighborhood centers, 10 community centers, five power centers, and one super regional center. Overall, these shopping centers are healthy, with low vacancy rates and well-maintained parking and landscaped areas. Exceptions are the shopping centers at the intersection of Route 360 and Courthouse Road (Rockwood Plaza, Rockwood Square and Oxbridge Square), which have had difficulty in recent years in maintaining a healthy mix of commercial uses.

Because the study area is situated between two heavily-developed commercial corridors (Route 60 and Route 360), most of the study area's current and future need for shopping centers will most likely be provided by

shopping centers and other types of commercial establishments located outside of the study area.

### **b. Commercial – Freestanding**

In addition to existing and planned shopping centers, commercial development within the study area is characterized by freestanding commercial uses near Route 60 (Midlothian Turnpike). Included among these uses are: small retail and convenience stores; contractor's offices, shops and storage yards; motor vehicle repair; personal services; a nursery, among other uses. About half of these uses (by acreage) have developed since 1994.

Since a large number of freestanding commercial uses currently exist along Midlothian Turnpike and Hull Street Road, the demand for additional freestanding commercial space should be relatively low in the study area.

### **COMMERCIAL DEMAND – CONCLUSIONS**

Commercial zoning and development activity, both within and outside of the study area, appears to be healthy, with little vacancy in area shopping centers (with the exception of those centers at Route 360 and Courthouse Road) and some newer freestanding businesses. There are currently 11 acres of vacant or minimally-improved commercial zoned land. The study area is primarily served by retail opportunities that lie outside of, but in close proximity to, the geography. Thus, future demand for commercial services should be provided by areas outside of the study area.

The development potential of existing commercially-zoned land within the study area would be affected by physical constraints such as parcel size and configuration, access, visibility, and by environmental constraints such as floodplains and wetlands. Also, market forces such as location, supply, demand and competition would influence the commercial viability of existing zoned sites as well as any lands that the *Plan* might suggest are appropriate for such uses based on established zoning and land use analysis guidelines. The *Plan* should account for these factors and suggest appropriate, alternate sites for commercial zoning and land use, suggesting more land for commercial development than might develop based on market demand alone.



### **3. Industrial Development**

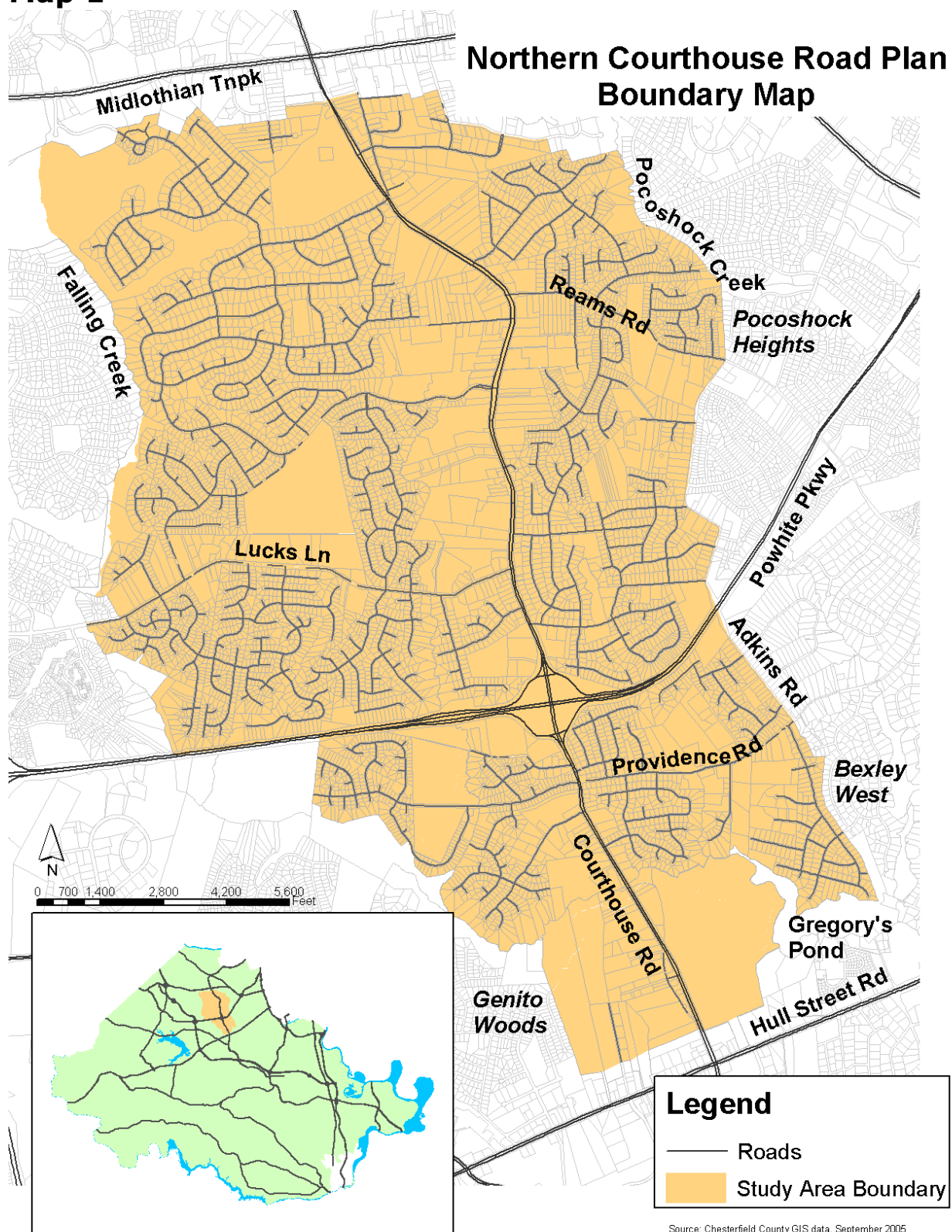
Most industrial zoning and land uses within the study area are located near Midlothian Turnpike in the northern end of the geography. Southport Industrial Park is the major industrial development in the area.

Between 1995 and 2004, approximately 54,585 square feet of industrial space has been developed within the study area.

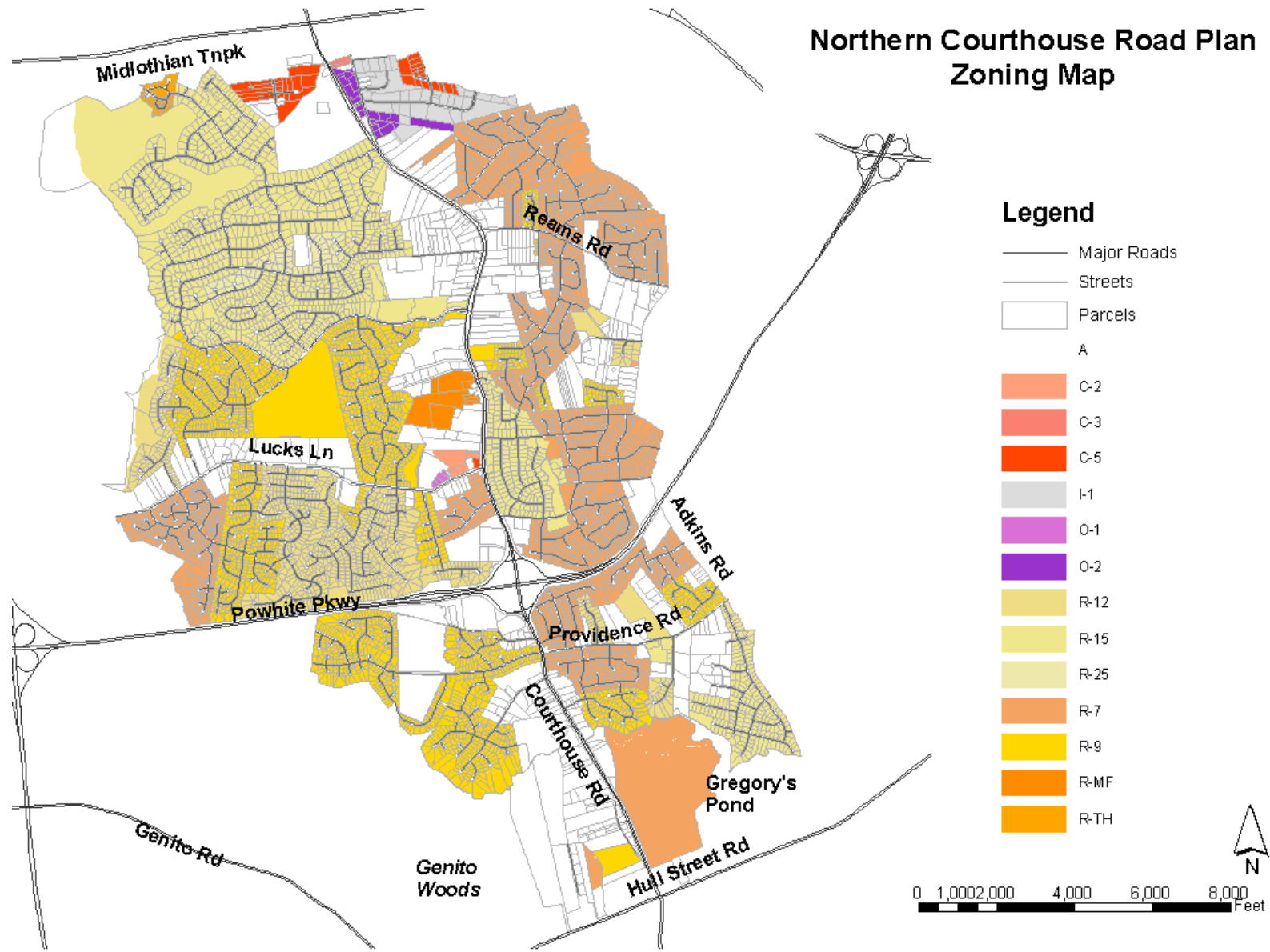
#### **INDUSTRIAL DEMAND – CONCLUSIONS**

The study area has experienced moderate industrial development over the past decade, with nearly all of this occurring along Midlothian Turnpike. There currently exists approximately 19 acres of industrial-zoned land that is vacant or minimally-improved. Future industrial development will most likely continue to locate in the vicinity of Midlothian Turnpike on the study area's northern edge.

## Map 1

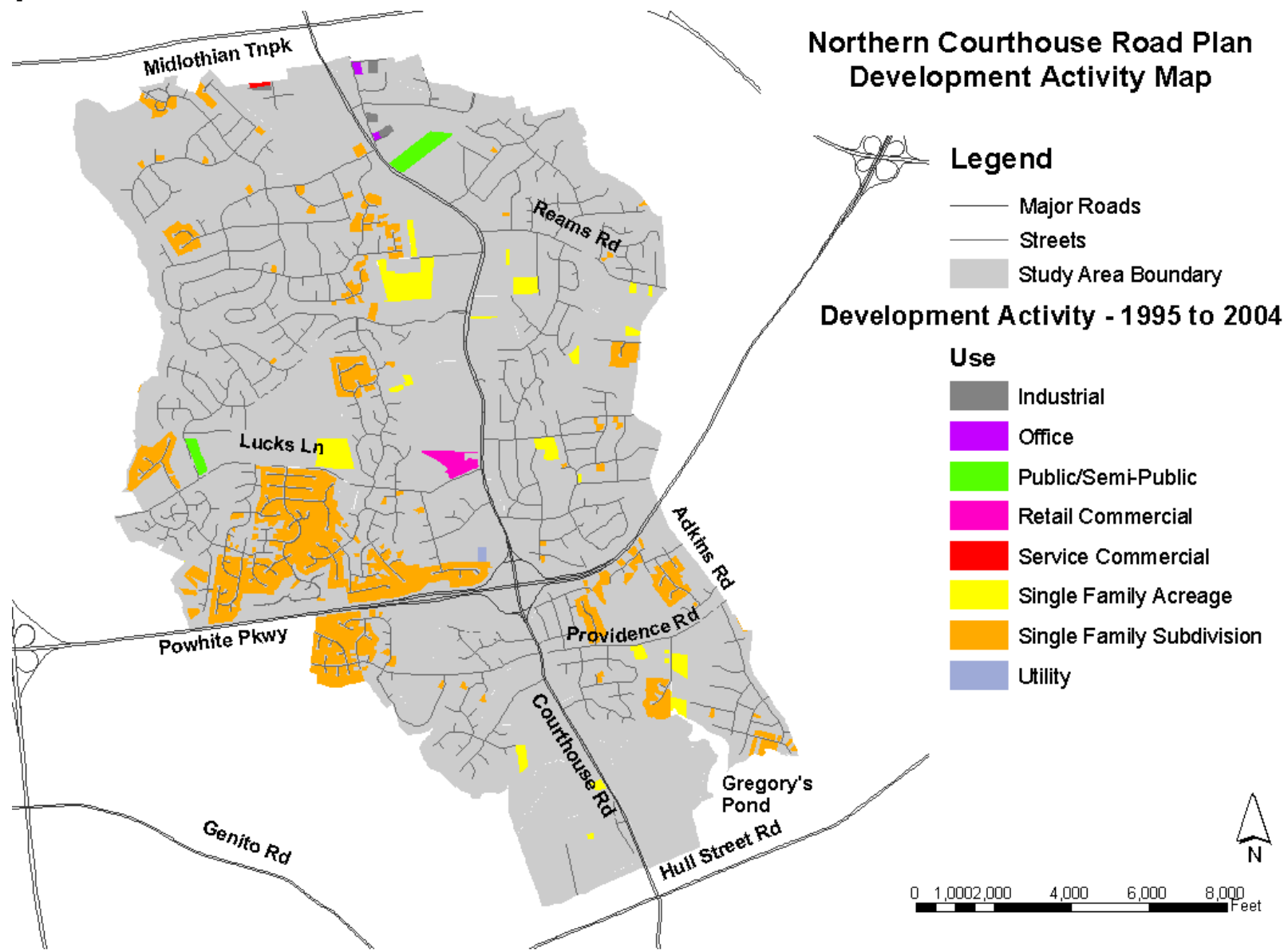


## Map 2



Source: Chesterfield County GIS data. July 2005

### Map 3



Source: Chesterfield County GIS data. December 31, 2004

## Map 4

